

March 11, 2013

To: Norwalk Mayor Doug Pierce

Mayor Pierce, this letter is a follow-up to the discussion last Saturday morning at MaidRite. At your and Marketa's suggestion, this is formalizing a request for you to bring to the Norwalk City Council.

Regardless of where people stand on the casino debate, there is a significant and growing level of frustration by many in Norwalk about the process and how it relates to Norwalk's interests. Many people are seeing a Warren County Referendum, followed by a five person Norwalk City Council vote, as insufficient in representing the views of the community. After all, the largest percentage of Warren County voters are over 10 miles away from the proposed location, and they might not share the same interests as folks who live in Norwalk. An example of this can be found in the Feb. 27th opinion piece by Indianola Record Herald columnist Bob Kling. *"Now that it's been announced and I've had time to ponder it, I love the idea! My understanding is that Indianola would receive around \$1 million, it would provide a number of jobs and the benefits would be a boon to our local economy. Also on the plus side, it would not be located in Indianola."*

Respectfully Mr. Mayor, it would be a shame if Norwalk conceded its voice to that kind of thinking.

As you, Marketa and Josh pointed out, the Norwalk City Council would surely consider the Norwalk precinct vote before taking action one way or the other. That's very encouraging to hear, and absolutely the right thing to do. But we're afraid that verbal assurance alone isn't clear enough, and will fall short in assuring Norwalk residents they have a true voice beyond our percentage of the county-wide referendum. We believe it's important to clearly define the threshold of City Council support in advance of the referendum, so the process is completely transparent and Norwalk voters know exactly where they stand. And at the end of the day, isn't that the best way to assure Norwalk citizens that they themselves will be truly deciding on what will likely be the biggest issue, perhaps ever, to face Norwalk?

We would respectfully ask you and the Norwalk City Council consider and pass a resolution, at least one month in advance of May 7th, that any City Council action mirror the will of Norwalk residents in the county-wide referendum vote. In other words, if a majority of Norwalk residents vote for a casino in Norwalk, then the City Council lends its support to the project. If a majority of Norwalk residents vote against a casino, then the City Council withdraws its support.

We believe this would alleviate a lot of frustration out there, and show the people of Norwalk their voice will be truly heard (either pro or con) by Norwalk city leadership. Please share this with the City Council, and again we want to thank you very much for the well spent time together on Saturday.

Signed,

Tom Coates
Bannon Buckley
Smar Buckley
Sarah Hayum
Lee Ann Coates
Kate Ochanpaukh
Brian L. Baker
Linda Hoef Slycord
Kristy Fox

Greg Deeb
Lois Atkinson
Erika Isley
Steen Raworn
Chris Hoktem
Tom Grueter
Mike Jackson